

Design Review Board
Tuesday, May 1, 2018 at 5:30 P.M.
City Hall Council Chambers

The Design Review Board (DRB) met in the City Hall Council Chambers on Tuesday May 1, 2018 at 5:30 PM with the following Board Members present: Ricky Richardson, Kevin DeMark, Michael Henthorn, Tip Pitts, and Gabriela Giron. Representing the City; Natalia Rosario, Planner III, Apoorva Kumar, Planner II, and Julie Roland Administrative, Assistant. Assistant City Manager Chris Story also attended the meeting.

Mr. Richardson, the Chair called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M; and said notice of the meeting had been posted and provided to the media 24 hours in advance as required by the Freedom of Information Act. There was a full Board present, constituting a quorum; and they could proceed with the business before the body.

The agenda for tonight's meeting was approved by acclamation.

No Meeting minutes ready.

Old Business: *None*

New Business

Public hearing regarding Preliminary Conceptual Approval, for proposed addition to the Piedmont Club, TMS#7-12-11-117.00 for the property located at 361 East Main Street, in the DT-5 District, from Joe Lauer, Clerestory Projects, on behalf of the Piedmont Club, Owner.

Ms. Natalia Rosario, Planner III came forward and was sworn, and she entered into the record the meeting packets the Board Members had previous received via email, tonight's presentations for all the cases, slides and power point as exhibit A. She introduced the 1st case on the agenda. She showed slides of the two Piedmont Club sections and the proposed South and West elevations. Ms. Rosario said Mr. Craig Lewis was not here tonight; and he had sent her his comments.

Mr. Richardson asked who owned the property across from the Nu-Way.

Ms. Rosario said the Church owned it.

Mr. Joe Lauer, Clerestory Projects, on behalf of the Piedmont Club said there would be one small addition to the West terrace as well; and there would be additional landscaping along the western terrace.

Ms. Rosario said regarding Mr. Craig Lewis, Stantec Design Consultants Comments:

Piedmont Club Requested Final Approval- a side addition to the building that is interior to the block. The developer is requesting final approval of the addition. Craig recommends that the streetscape along Kennedy St. be upgraded, if possible, as well as the consolidation or reduction in width of several driveways to the site along Kennedy.

Mr. Richardson opened the public hearing; and he asked if there was anyone present who wished to speak in favor of the request, or in opposition of the request, and if anyone present had a question to come forward and state their name and address for the record. No one came forward Mr. Richardson closed the public hearing portion.

Board Deliberation

Mr. DeMark moved final approval of the request, and he was seconded by Mr. Pitts. The motion was approved by a vote of 5 to 0.

Public Hearing regarding Preliminary Conceptual Approval, regarding the construction of the Dr. T.K. Gregg Community Center, TMS#7-12-05-001.00 & 7-12-01-072.01 for the property located at 650 Howard Street & 704 Howard Street, in the DT-4 District, from William Gray, Architect, McMillan Pazdan Smith Architecture, on behalf of City of Spartanburg, Owner.

Mr. William Gray, Architect with McMillan Pazdan Smith came forward on behalf of the City of Spartanburg. Owner and he was sworn; and he said they were looking for final approval tonight of the Dr. T.K. Gregg Community Center. He said they received Preliminary Approval at last month's meeting. He said they had engaged a Civil Engineer and Landscape Architect for the project. Mr. Adam Flynn "Project Architect", McMillan Pazdan Smith, came forward and was sworn. He said the project site was the former Oakside Apartments in the North Side on Howard Street. Mr. Flynn said they were incorporating Butterfly Branch Creek into the project as well. The site is zoned DT-4; and they are presenting the building as a civil building and he read that definition. He said it was description specific. Mr. Flynn showed a closer up drawing of site under the ownership of City of Spartanburg. They are mainly looking at the eastern end of Howard Street and also looking at parking with CCA and Cleveland Academy regarding shared parking. They will be closing Aden Street and turning that entry into a driveway for that project.

Mr. Richardson asked if the previous meeting opened the talk about his mention tonight of parking at another location.

Mr. Flynn said yes.

Mr. Flynn showed a slide of the existing sites and that there was a 10' fall from the existing corner of Howard and Aden Streets. He showed a slide of the view across Howard Street and they were two developments owned by the Housing Authority. He showed slides of how the site dips and rises. A slide of the corner of Howard and Aden was shown describing existing condition and the CCA building. A slide of the conceptual site plan of what they were proposing was shown for the building. Mr. Flynn said the building would all be on one level and they have taken strides to address where the higher altitude finished element for one foot lower than Howard and Aden. They are using existing on Aden Street and as part of it they were leaving a section undisturbed for potential future development that a 60' wide building may be put on the site. He said looking at the Howard Street elevation they thought it was crucial a 6' curb long with trees, principally focusing on a smaller pedestrian friendly tiered zone. They proposed landscaping along the building and on street parking on the street.

Mr. Henthorn asked why that was.

Mr. Flynn said it was part of addressing the grade changes.

Mr. Richardson asked if Butterfly Branch would be a destination.

Mr. Gray explained.

Mr. Flynn continued his presentation and explained the primary pedestrian plaza would start on Howard Street. He said you were looking at a 7' to 9' drop; and they needed to mitigate and they wanted to make sure they are featuring clearly a water slide behind and keep a visual connection. He showed another slide looking through a window at the water slide and at tiered plantings. Mr. Flynn showed two street facing elevations; and said they wanted to ensure they were addressing proper glazing. He showed along Preston Street they could see a continuation of grade going up to the building.

Board Questions

Mr. DeMark asked did it slope up.

Mr. Flynn explained the intent is for the plaza to be level except for slope for drainage.

Mr. Richardson thought it looked great.

Mr. Henthorn said it picks up what Mr. Lewis had commented on in his report, and he asked about on street parking.

Mr. Chris Story, Assistant City Manager said they have a Traffic Engineer and a designer interfacing with SCDOT about the desire for on street parking; and he said they may agree to permit it; or the City would take ownership of the Street, or SCDOT would not allow for the on-street parking at all.

Mr. Henthorn referenced the front elevation of the building and wondered why it did not have more glass in order to express that piece of the building more.

Mr. Flynn said they could take that under advisement.

Mr. Henthorn said his other concern was related to Mr. Lewis' comment regarding if there was a way to bring that level down to Preston Street, and they would not have that issue at that corner.

Mr. Flynn said that budget was a key point.

Mr. Henthorn felt the budget comment Mr. Flynn just commented to was just a way to get things the way they were trying to get them to go; and it seemed to always happen at corners. He said not everything had to be at one level, and they would like to see more of an attempt by them to get things at that level.

Mr. Richardson opened the public hearing and asked anyone who wished to speak regarding the request to come forward and state their name and addresses for the record.

Mr. Carl Fowler of 213 Gowan Street came forward and said on the back they were showing a community garden; and there was a vacant lot behind there; that he thought someone had mentioned parking there. Mr. Fowler asked had they already purchased that portion; and he said he and his son had bargained for it back in 2007.

Mr. Story said there were no plans for that right now. He felt there was plenty of room to do what he was referring to and showed him on the slide where the development would be.

Mr. Fowler said it was a little over an acre of land.

Mr. Richardson said they had no plans to do anything with that at this time.

Mr. Richardson asked did anyone else wish to speak on this request. There was no one else to speak. Mr. Richardson closed the public hearing.

Mr. Richardson moved the Board grant conceptual approval and he was seconded by Mr. DeMark. The motion was approved by a vote of 5 to 0.

Mr. Richardson said they would look forward to seeing them soon with all their information required into for a final approval hopefully next month.

Public Meeting, Informal Review: New construction at TMS#7-12-11-127.00 for the property located at 150 S. Pine Street, in the DT-5 District, from Jim Furman, FFC Limited Partnership, DBA Wendy's on behalf of Baehr Investment, LLC Owner.

Ms. Rosario came forward and introduced the case for the Wendy's that would like to build a new Wendy's to be located at 150 S. Pine Street in the DT-5 District, just south of where the Skillet Restaurant was located.

Mr. Jim Furman, FFC Limited Partnership, DBA Wendy's came forward and he was sworn. He distributed some renderings to the Board Members. Mr. Furman said they would like to move from the current location, and build a newer Wendy's on the vacant lot at 150 S. Pine Street. They had talked to Craig Lewis; and he had given them suggestions as to what would be a more appropriate building design to satisfy the 50% glazing. He showed where the drive-thru would be at the back.

Mr. Tige Darner, CFO, Tar Heel Capital Corporation came forward and was sworn; and he explained the proposed site plan, how the drive thru would work, and the egress and ingress would primarily be on S. Pine Street. Mr. Darner explained how the flow of the traffic would work. He showed they had addressed the concerns of the view of the drive thru from the street. They would also like to have a patio outside with landscaping in the back. He explained the landscaping on the front would depend on the setbacks and they were not sure about that at the moment. More slides were shown; and the newer renderings depicted the concept of what they would like to do.

Mr. Henthorn asked if someone was walking down the sidewalk on Pine Street and came into the Main entrance on Pine; where would they be walking in to the store.

Mr. Darner said there would be a couple of kiosks to the side that would open into an open area. The kiosks would be used so a person could self-order if they wished, instead of standing in a line.

Mr. DeMark asked was there a grade change on the front.

Mr. Darner said this was a very preliminary drawing. He explained they could make it at street grade.

Mr. Pitts said ideally the ratio function would be on that street side.

Mr. Darner said ideally, they had it that way, but they had to sketch it out for more glazing.

Mr. DeMark asked was that picture the actual grade, or was it captured different from what was there before.

Mr. Darner said it was a fairly flat lot. The parking lot in the back was two to three feet higher than the street. He said the building would be positioned more to the North part of the site; and there were certain things they could do and get closer to street grade if they wanted them to, and make it easier for pedestrians.

Mr. Richardson asked about the size of the proposed lot compared to the current location.

Mr. Darner said it was similar to the typical Wendy's lot; and 65% of their business was drive thru. He said they had determined they could get by with less parking on the proposed site. He said when another property got developed nearby, there would be an outlet to improve the flow. They had talked to DOT and they were very comfortable with it.

Mr. Richardson asked how big it was.

Mr. Darner said about 0.68 acres.

Mr. Richardson asked would they close the other Wendy's on S. Pine.

Mr. Darner said the S. Pine current location was a leased space.

Mr. Richardson asked did they own it.

Mr. Darner said no; but they do operate it.

Mr. DeMark said one of Craig Lewis comments was you can't have more than 20' without glass or windows.

Mr. Darner said what he used with them was a design element.

Mr. DeMark said there was a brand-new development across the street that meets all the requirements of the Downtown Code.

Mr. Richardson said if it was his restaurant and the accessibility was bad, and he was thinking about the new building across the street, and the reflection across the street when he looks at this piece of property; he would much rather see the entire lot built at one time. He said he was thinking about the property as a whole. He does think egress and ingress for the presumed traffic would be problematic.

Mr. Darner said he could not speak for the people who owned the rest of it, but he believes as that back area opened up, it will get people off the main street. He said Mr. Lewis had brought that up also.

They would like to keep the current location on S. Pine open while the proposed one was going up.

Mr. Richardson asked if he had ever demoed and rebuilt before.

Mr. Darner said yes, they had; but the people that owned the current Wendy's were not interested in that.

Mr. Furman asked the Board Members if they addressed all the concerns regarding the code; would it be possible this could be worked out.

Mr. Henthorn said this was only a pre-application.

Mr. DeMark said if they showed the Board Members plans that met the intent of the code he would be ok with it.

Mr. Darner asked the Board Members to please give them their feedback on what they had shown them tonight.

Mr. Henthorn thought the renderings they had brought with them with all the glass were great.

Mr. DeMark asked what if all the food service area was all you saw at front, and have a "L" shaped building that creates the street frontage they would like to achieve. He said if it was all glass on the front, and the plain side was "L" shaped, they could push it back some with the drive thru. He asked if they had enough space to make all that vehicular stuff work.

Mr. Furman said at their business in western NC Wendy's location in Boone, NC they had the same type of set up and traffic flow.

Mr. Pitts asked if they had prototype stores.

Mr. Darner said yes.

Mr. Richardson asked if Wendy's offered an "L" shape.

Mr. Darner said no; and he asked the Board Members about an alternative in which they could make the arch appear.

Mr. Furman asked about 60% build out on the front if they did the "L", it would change the building which is why they had changed the original they had first sent in.

Mr. DeMark asked what if they put in some faux windows.

Mr. Furman said they talked to Craig Lewis about that; and he said it would require a variance.

Mr. Henthorn said he liked all the glass.

Mr. Demark asked Mr. Henthorn was he saying he was ok with the balance.

Mr. Henthorn explained.

Mr. DeMark asked what if it was a green wall with something growing on it.

Mr. Pitts said he would like to see a patio along the street level; with urban tree wells between the building edge and curb edge to shrink up the big island they have.

Mr. DeMark said it would make the big green space shrink.

Mr. Darner felt it would require a variance; and that he could have an architect draw it up.

Mr. Richardson liked the streetscape, but he would not be able to sit there with all the trucks coming by. He wondered what if they moved the building and made the "L" and put streetscape on the other end, and moved the patio somewhere else to give them some street frontage and allow the variance. Mr. Richardson asked Mr. Pitts about that idea.

Mr. Pitts felt the noise level would be the same. He said the code wanted to activate the street.

Mr. Darner said it really would be more practical to have it back there.

Mr. Furman asked the Board Members if they could present two different concepts.

Mr. DeMark felt they needed to address the code from the most current one they presented tonight, rather than what they had previously submitted, and he thought they needed to come up with something about that big green space.

Mr. Henthorn asked Mr. Story was that middle turn lane required by the DOT.

Assistant City Manager Story said he did not know.

Mr. DeMark did not know if it was the owner's preference or not.

Mr. Furman said he talked with DOT about that and he explained what they had told him.

Mr. Henthorn asked was the DOT recommending that.

Mr. Furman said the DOT approved it and told him that was acceptable to them.

Assistant City Manager Story said they did not need a vote from the Board tonight; that the Design Team had just wanted their feedback.

Mr. Darner said to summarize; the Board Members were good with design, and what they wanted to see them bring back a tweaked version regarding certain things and have a floor plan.

Mr. DeMark said maybe bring some elevations as well.

Mr. Henthorn thought the streetscapes and landscaping were important too.

Public Meeting, Informal Review: New construction of Smith's Drug Store at TMS #7-12-21-016.00 for the property located at 142 East Main Street, in the DT-6 District, from William Gray, Architect, McMillan Pazdan Smith Architecture, on behalf of Kuntal Patel, Owner.

Ms. Rosario came forward and said another informational, regarding Smith's Drugs for redevelopment of the site. She said McMillan Pazdan Smith had been working on this and also, they have Craig Lewis notes on this project. She pointed out the main one was the drive thru elements. Staff preferred to have no vehicular movement across that sidewalk; but in comparison of what Mr. Gray was going to show them tonight it was better just for one. Ms. Rosario said William Gray and Glen Campbell were here with the McMillan Pazdan Smith Architecture Firm and would speak to the building and the architecture. This was just for an informational item tonight for Smith's Drug store at 142 E. Main Street. The owners of Smith's Drug also own the parking lot. They intend to redevelop the entire site.

Mr. Pitts asked where the property owner's line ended.

Mr. William Gray with MPS came forward and was sworn and he explained where the owner's property line ended. Mr. Gray showed slides and explained. He said it was very important to his clients to be part of downtown and he wanted to revamp the site. His client understood the legacy Smith's Drug Store had been all of these years. Mr. Gray showed the site plan, and said there would potentially have another tenant that will front Main Street and then Smith, primarily on Dunbar. He explained vehicular access was crucial for his business for people with mobility issues. The intent would be one-way entrance on Main Street, with some diagonal parking next to the building and one way exit on Dunbar Street. There had been some talk of a drive thru pharmacy, but he was not exactly sure about that yet. He showed the next rendering of the Library Commons, as to how he would like to address the drive thru and parking.

Mr. DeMark asked about something on that rendering and would that be a door.

Mr. Gray said yes; but it would only be open during business hours. They closed at 6:00 p.m. He said as far as the height of the building they wanted to do 3 stories, or even 4; but did not know yet for sure.

Mr. Glenn Campbell of "MPS" came forward and was sworn. He is the Project Architect working with Mr. Gray. Mr. Campbell said it would be at street level. He explained about the mass and scale. The first floor would be commercial and everything after that would be multifamily. He showed a 3-D slide and showed the cornice element which he explained.

He said the next slide showed a little park they wished to maintain and activate the corner of the building and on the other end he said their would-be one-way access for parking area. He explained on next slide from a perspective of looking SE with a lot of glass on Main. He showed a slide from Dunbar, looking Northwest. He showed another slide that depicted how they wished to cut the building in for residents.

Mr. Gray said one thing to mention was the park area may be interested in a restaurant area with streamed lights.

Assistant City Manager Chris Story asked about the width of the lot.

Mr. Campbell said coming here tonight was the next step before they took the building to the next level; and they would like conceptual approval before they went any further.

Mr. Story said they would need to make sure it was wide enough.

Mr. Pitts asked if they thought they could get fire access through there.

Mr. DeMark asked was there parking outside, and was that why it also stepped back.

Mr. Campbell explained.

Mr. Gray said they were trying to create a seamless edge along the street; and it was absolutely critical to his operation.

Mr. DeMark said they would be making a road, and that had not functioned there before.

Mr. Gray said there used to be a road there.

Mr. Campbell said they were thinking about that and they had thought of a speed bump.

Mr. Pitts said Dunbar Street had gotten crowded. It was harder to find a parking spot. He said this was one of the most exciting things to him downtown.

Mr. Richardson felt the drawings were terrific.

Mr. Campbell said they are wanting to activate the street and having glass and trying to minimize the entrance; and they kind of wanted to make the park and pedestrian space and interconnect.

Mr. Henthorn said he liked it, and hoped they could keep it 4 stories.

Mr. Richardson asked if this building would have similar massing to the Library Commons.

Mr. Campbell said it would be close.

Mr. Henthorn asked was the intent for the park to be done by others.

Assistant City Manager Story said the City owned that spot.

Mr. Richardson thought when they looked at the width of what it really needed to be, it would be nice to be bigger rather than narrower.

Mr. Campbell said one other thing, there was a skinny section that was also a part of the project.

Assistant City Manager Story said they would move a couple of angle spaces on Dunbar and would pick up a couple on Main Street.

Mr. DeMark asked was this informational only tonight.

Ms. Rosario said yes.

Staff Announcements

Ms. Rosario welcomed Apoorva Kumar, Associate Planner to the Planning Department and said she graduated from Cornell University.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 7:15PM.



Ricky Richardson, Chair

Edits Julie Roland, Tia Beatty, and Logan Witter